

# COURT INTERPRETER PROGRAM ADVISORY COMMITTEE

**August 18, 2017**

12:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

State Courts Building

1501 W. Washington, Phoenix, AZ 85007

Conference Room 230

**APPROVED**

**October 27, 2017**

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**Present:** Judge Don Taylor; Mr. Juan Carlos Cordova; Ms. Diane Culin; Mr. Alfred Gonzalez; Mr. Juan Pablo Guzman; Judge Rosa Mroz; Ms. Kathy Schaben.

**Telephonic:** None.

**Absent/Excused:** Mr. Hyung Choi; Judge Anna Huberman.

**Presenters/Guests:** Mr. Scott Loos.

**Administrative Office of the Courts:** Ms. Cathy Clarich, Ms. Kelly Gray, and Mr. David Svoboda.

## **I. CALL TO ORDER**

### **A. Welcome and Opening Remarks**

The August 2017 meeting of the Court Interpreter Program Advisory Committee (CIPAC) was called to order by the Honorable Don Taylor, Chair, at 12:08 p.m.

### **B. Approval of the May 2017 Meeting Minutes**

The draft minutes from the May 19, 2017 of the Court Interpreter Program Advisory Committee were presented for approval. The Chair called for any omissions or corrections to the minutes; there were none.

- Motion was made by Judge Rosa Mroz to approve the May 19, 2017 minutes of the Court Interpreter Program Advisory Committee. Seconded by Mr. Juan Pablo Guzman. Motion passed unanimously.

## **II. REGULAR BUSINESS**

### **A. Arizona Court Interpreter Credentialing Program Update**

Mr. David Svoboda, in his role as the AOC Language Access Coordinator, provided an update on the Arizona Court Interpreter Credentialing Program (ACICP). The group discussed the following:

- Statistical information, including the number of interpreters registered in the Arizona Court Interpreter Registry, the number of credentialed interpreters, and notable trends in the testing process.
- The results of the May 2017 Oral Court Interpreter Exam, as well as the overall pass rates for this exam to date.
- The results of the July 2017 English Written Exam and Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI), as well as the overall pass rates for these exams to date.
- The remaining ACICP testing dates for 2017 and tentative dates for the 2018 exam cycles.

The group discussed issues related to the implementation of the preference model for credentialed contract interpreters (effective July 1, 2017) and the credentialing requirement for court staff interpreters (effective June 30, 2019) under [Administrative Order 2016-02](#). Several committee members shared their experiences and challenges. It was determined that many courts desire information guidance regarding the requirements under the order.

It was suggested that a workgroup be formed to provide information and recommendations to courts regarding the preference model for credentialed contract interpreters and the credentialing requirement for court staff interpreters under the order. It was also suggested that AOC explore the possibility of soliciting more information about how each court is managing the preference model.

The following individuals agreed to serve on the workgroup:

- Mr. Juan Carlos Cordova
  - Mr. Scott Loos
  - Ms. Kathy Schaben
  - Ms. Cathy Clarich
- Motion was made by Ms. Diane Culin requesting that AOC send a reminder notice to all Arizona courts that the preference for credentialed interpreters under Administrative Order 2016-02 has taken effect. Seconded by Judge Rosa Mroz. Motion passed unanimously.

## **B. Video Remote Interpreting Proof of Concept (PoC) Update and Next Steps**

Ms. Kathy Schaben, Committee Member, discussed the progress of the Video Remote Interpreting PoC project in Yuma County, which concluded on July 31,

2017. She reviewed the purpose of project and provided feedback regarding the quality and effectiveness of the services provided during the pilot.

She described the equipment provided as effective and agile when utilized appropriately by both the interpreters and court staff. The feedback from judges and court staff was very positive overall.

Ms. Schaben described some possible challenges with implementing a system statewide, including the bandwidth requirements of the equipment, availability hours of interpreters provided (the interpreters provided in the pilot were in the Eastern time zone), and a lack of a clear pricing structure, service terms, and business requirements to establish a statewide contract.

Mr. Svoboda, the AOC representative during the project, indicated that he and the Yuma Superior Court were working on a final report which he will be providing to this Committee soon.

In addition, Ms. Catherine Clarich, Administrative Office of Courts Caseflow Unit Manager, discussed the next steps for pursuing remote services statewide. She provided background information on a remote services project for court reporting which is underway in Cochise County. She indicated that the project has been successful for Cochise County, and other courts in Arizona have expressed interest in a similar statewide remote court reporting program.

The AOC is exploring the most efficient and cost-effective options for courts interested in remote court reporting and video remote interpreting.

Ms. Clarich indicated that AOC required additional input to initiate a Request for Proposal (RFP) for a statewide video remote interpreting contract. She requested that the Committee form a workgroup to assist the AOC in drafting business requirements for this RFP.

The following individuals agreed to serve on the workgroup:

- Judge Don Taylor
- Ms. Kathy Schaben
- Ms. Diane Culin
- Ms. Jill Ankerstein
- Ms. Cathy Clarich

### **C. Credentialing of Navajo Interpreters**

Mr. David Svoboda, in his role as the AOC Language Access Coordinator, requested that the group discuss options for credentialing Navajo interpreters through the Arizona Court Interpreter Credentialing Program (ACICP).

He indicated that Arizona courts have need of qualified Navajo interpreters. The ACICP currently does not credential Navajo interpreters due to the unavailability of an Oral Proficiency Interview (OPI) through the current vendor and absence of a Navajo language Oral Court Interpreter Exam.

Mr. Svoboda explained candidates must pass an OPI as part of the Tier 1 credential. ACICP currently utilizes Language Testing International (LTI) for OPI services. LTI uses the [American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages \(ACTFL\) Proficiency Guidelines](#) in rating exams. Candidates must earn a “Superior” or “Advanced” (Low, Medium or High) rating on the OPI provided by LTI as part of the Tier 1 credential. LTI does not have a Navajo OPI available at this time.

ALTA Language Services (ALTA) offers Navajo OPI, however the scoring model differs from LTI. ALTA uses a proprietary [1 – 12 scoring model](#) which assigns a numeric value to each performance level. The group reviewed ALTA’s score matrix to recommend an acceptable passing score for an OPI provided by ALTA. The NCSC suggests the passing score be no lower than level 8. However, it was noted that at level 8 a speaker “...will potentially cause misunderstandings between himself/herself and the listener based on some lack of ability to convey clearly his/her message.” As it is vital that a court interpreter perform at a level where misunderstandings are uncommon, using a higher cut score was recommended. After reviewing ALTA’s score matrix, the group determined ALTA’s levels 9 – 12+ would be acceptable for credentialing purposes.

Mr. Svoboda went on to explain that candidates must pass an Oral Court Interpreter Exam (for languages for which an exam exists) to earn a Tier 2 – 4 credential. The Administrative Office of the U.S. Courts (AOUSC) once offered certification in the Navajo language but this test is no longer available. There are, however, a few individuals who still possess this certification and who would qualify for reciprocity recognition at the Tier 4 level, as the federal certification is already approved for reciprocity per ACICP policy.

He went on to explain that in years past, the National Center of Interpretation (NCI) at the University of Arizona, the New Mexico AOC, and the Arizona AOC collaborated on a credentialing program for the Navajo language. Candidates who completed training and passed an interpreting exam were issued a Navajo Court Interpreter Certification. While this program is no longer in existence, there are still a few individuals who possess this certification. The State of New Mexico does continue to recognize this credential in its interpreter certification program. The group discussed the merits of recognizing the Navajo Court Interpreter Certification and determined ACICP should do so.

Finally, he described the New Mexico Judiciary’s newly developed exam and certification for Navajo interpreters, which is styled after the NCSC Oral Court

Interpreter Exam. As the only current ongoing effort to train and credential interpreters of Navajo, the group determined ACICP should recognize this exam.

- Motion was made by Judge Rosa Mroz to:
  1. Allow the Arizona Court Interpreter Credentialing Program to utilize ALTA for OPI services.
  2. Accept ALTA scoring levels of 9 – 12+ for the OPI as passing.
  3. Accept the National Center of Interpretation Navajo Court Interpreter Certification for reciprocity, mirroring the current ACICP reciprocity requirements for NCSC certifications.
  4. Recognize the newly developed New Mexico Navajo court interpreter exam, mirroring the current ACICP passing scores and reciprocity requirements for NCSC certifications.

Seconded by Ms. Kathy Schaben. Motion passed unanimously.

#### **D. CLAC Update**

Mr. David Svoboda, in his role as the AOC Language Access Coordinator, shared his experiences at the May 2017 Council of Language Access Coordinators (CLAC) conference. He indicated the focus this year was on community engagement and working with justice partners to improve language access. There were many valuable topics discussed including video remote interpreting strategies, resources for credentialing Navajo interpreters, issues related to legal certification of ASL interpreters, training of spoken language interpreters, and the problem of vicarious trauma to interpreters who work on emotionally difficult cases.

#### **E. 2018 CIPAC Calendar of Meeting**

Mr. David Svoboda, in his role as staff to the Committee, discussed 2018 meeting dates for this body. It was determined that the Committee staff would propose the following dates for review and approval by other AOC committees:

- Friday, February 23, 2018: 12:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
- Friday, May 18, 2018: 12:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
- Friday, August 10, 2018: 12:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
- Friday, November 2, 2018: 12:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

### **III. OTHER BUSINESS**

#### **A. Contract Translator for AOC Forms**

Mr. David Svoboda, in his role as the AOC Language Access Coordinator, discussed continuing efforts by the AOC to maintain and improve forms translations. A translator was recently contracted to assist with the project. The contract lasts through the end of the fiscal year.

#### **IV. CALL TO PUBLIC AND ADJOURNMENT**

##### **A. Good of the Order/Call to the Public**

The Chair asked the Committee if there were any other matters to discuss and made a call to the public. There were no responses.

##### **B. Adjourn**

- Motion was made by Judge Rosa Mroz at 2:35 p.m. to adjourn. Seconded by Ms. Diane Culin. Motion passed unanimously.

#### **V. NEXT COMMITTEE DATE**

Friday, October 27, 2017  
12:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.  
State Courts Building, Conference Room 230  
1501 W. Washington St., Phoenix, AZ 85007